

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 ISO-00 SCA-01 PPT-02 L-03 CIAE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 /065 W  
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P R 060838Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY SANAA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2929

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

S E C R E T SANAA 2139

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CPAS, PFOR, YE, LY, UK

SUBJ: ARABIC IN PASSPORTS

REF: STATE 218198

1. IN COMMON WITH SOME BUT NOT ALL OTHER DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS IN SANAA (FRENCH WERE INADVERTENTLY FORGOTTEN) WE HAD RECEIVED LATE IN OCTOBER A CIRCULAR NOTE FROM FOREIGN MINISTRY DATED OCTOBER 21 REQUESTING THAT PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION PARTICULARS HENCEFORTH BE DUPLICATED IN ARABIC LANGUAGE IN PASSPORTS OF INTENDED VISITORS TO YEMEN.

2. OBSERVING THAT NOTE EMANATED FROM CONSULAR SECTION OF FOREIGN MINISTRY, WHICH IS HEADED BY A NOTORIOUSLY INEPT AND SENILE POLITICAL APPOINTEE, AND THAT BOTH FOREIGN MINISTER NU'MAN AND ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER ASNAG ABSENT FROM YEMEN AT TIME NOTE CIRCULATED, EMBASSY DECIDED AVOID ANY IMMEDIATE REACTION AND AWAIT RETURN OF ASNAG OR NU'MAN TO ASCERTAIN WHETHER NOTE HAD ANY SANCTION ABOVE LEVEL OF CONSULAR SECTION IN FOREIGN MINISTRY.

3. SHORTLY AFTER RECEIPT OF NOTE, WE CONSULTED WITH UK AND FRG EMBASSIES. BRITISH AMBASSADOR, WHO IS STILL  
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NEW TO YARG'S HAPHAZARD BEHAVIOR PATTERNS, HAD ASSUMED

CIRCULAR NOTE REFLECTED A CONSIDERED HIGH LEVEL DECISION AND HAD CABLED FULL REPORT TO LONDON. FRG AMBASSADOR, WITH GREATER EXPERIENCE, HAD MADE NO REPORT BUT HAD ASKED FONOFF UNDERSECRETARY AL-KHODR, WHO COMPLETELY UNAWARE OF NOTE, WHETHER IT HAD APPROVAL AT ANY HIGHER LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT.

4. REPLY TO FRG AMBASSADOR'S QUESTION, RECEIVED NOVEMBER 5. WAS THAT CIRCULAR NOTE HAD BEEN VETTED BY NO ONE ABOVE CONSULAR SECTION; FOREIGN EMBASSIES COULD CONSIDER MATTER MORE OR LESS INDEFINITELY UNDER REVIEW.

5. FRENCH EMBASSY, WHICH WITH QUESTIONABLE WISDOM APPLIED TO FONOFF FOR COPY OF NOTE, WAS TOLD TO FORGET IT.

6. BRITISH AND GERMAN AMBASSADORS AND WE AGREE THAT IN CIRCUMSTANCES BEST WAY TO LET YARG SLIDE OFF UNILATERAL ACTION OF FONOFF CONSULAR SECTION IS FOR EVERYONE TO AVOID MAKING AN ISSUE. IT HAS BEEN FURTHER AGREED THAT AS SOON AS EITHER NU'MAN OR ASNAG RETURNS I SHOULD RAISE QUIETLY IN EFFORT ENSURE THAT CIRCULAR NOTE IS ALLOWED TO LAPSE. AT BRITISH AMBASSADOR'S REQUEST I WILL ALSO SEEK TO CONFIRM THAT NO INSTRUCTIONS MISTAKENLY SENT BY FONOFF TO AIRLINES OR IMMIGRATION AUTHORITIES OR IF THEY HAVE THAT THEY BE DISCREETLY RESCINDED.

7. FROM GERMAN AMBASSADOR WHO HAS BEEN IN TOUCH WITH BLOC MISSIONS, WE UNDERSTAND THEY ARE IN ACCORD WITH ABOVE APPROACH AND DESIRABILITY OF MAKING IT EASIER FOR YARG TO CLIMB DOWN BY AVOIDING PROTESTS. WE WILL INFORM DEPARTMENT OF ANY FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS, ESPECIALLY PROJECTED DISCUSSION WITH NU'MAN OR ASNAG.

8. WE HAVE NO CURRENT INDICATION THAT LIBYA IN SOME WAY INVOLVED, ALTHOUGH WE DO NOT DISCOUNT THIS. YEMENIS ON THEIR OWN ARE NOT INCLINED TO IRRATIONAL XENOPHOBIC ACTS WHICH WORK AGAINST PRACTICAL INTERESTS, IN THIS CASE DESIRE FOR EXPANDED TOURISM.

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## Message Attributes

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